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THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE SECOND CENTURY

FREDERICK C. GRANT

Dixon, Illinois

The purpose of the present essay is twofold: first, to set forth a general presentation of the doctrines of eschatology as they are to be found in the writings of the second century, including, not only the works of those whom later history has looked upon as the theologians of that period, but also the less authoritative documents, some of which were either contemporaneously or later pronounced heretical—thus acquiring a view, if possible, of the faith of the great mass of Christians throughout the Roman Empire; and secondly, to suggest a solution of the problems involved in the following special questions: Is the eschatology of the second century a continuation of the primitive Christian eschatology? To what extent is it a new development, under new influences, Greek or Hellenistic, to which the church was subject in its new environment (“gentile Christianity”)?

How are we to account for the phenomenon of Chiliasm? Did Chiliasm represent the primitive Christian eschatology?

The importance of the eschatological question for the interpretation of the New Testament writings, and especially the Gospels, is now generally recognized. A similar importance is to be attached to the bearing which it has on the writings of the period following that of the New Testament literature. Granted that Christianity arose in the environment of apocalyptic Judaism, whose mental, moral, and spiritual atmosphere was charged with fervent messianic expectation, and that so strong was this influence upon the new religion that from at least one point of view its specific original content was simply the conviction of the nearness of the judgment and the identification of Jesus with the Messiah, then what became of this Christian messianic hope in the second century? There is also to be considered the reflexive bearing of

the state of these beliefs in the second century upon their state in the first. If, for example, it should appear that eschatology completely disappeared in the second century, our conception of what was fundamental and essential in the primitive Christian message and in the gospel of our Lord must somehow be altered. Happily, the facts in the case do not warrant such a hypothesis. But the course of eschatological thought and feeling in the second century cannot be without significance, not only for the general history of primitive Christianity, but also for the history of such thought and feeling in the first century.

The sources with which we shall have to deal are not all contained within the period 100-200 A.D. But sources outside this century are chosen simply to illustrate, as far as possible, the common faith of the generality of Christians in the second century. Roughly, the present field of investigation begins where the New Testament leaves off, and ends with Irenaeus; but for the sake of illustration either of the common faith or of special tendencies, it will be widened to include Origen and Hippolytus.

I

As in the Jewish apocalyptic literature, though in less elaborate form, there is an eschatological *interpretation of contemporary history*. This appears more prominently in the earlier part of the century, which was the more strongly influenced by the thought-world of apocalypticism, than in the later. According to Barnabas, τὸ τέλειον σκάνδαλον ἤγγικε; and Hermas looks forward to immediate tribulation as a prelude of the end. The Didache undertakes a formal description or program of the final events, felt to be near at hand.¹

But later, owing perhaps to the influence of the apologists, or on account of the social-political atmosphere and the more satisfactory

¹ Cf. Barn. 4:1; 5:3; 10:11; 11, etc.; 21:3; Hermas, *Vis.* 2:2:7; 3:8:9; 3:9:5; 4; Did. 16:1 ff. Barnabas represents the world as under the dominion of the adversary, 2:1, 10; 4:1, 9; 18:2. And the primitive view (as represented in the New Testament in I John, II Timothy, Hebrews, etc.) of the end as approaching and near at hand is to be seen in I Clem. 28:1; 34:3; 58:1; Ignatius, *Eph.* 11:1 (note the emphasis in the brief watchwords, ἐσχατοὶ καιροί, and the warning against "the wrath to come"); II Clem. 7:1; 7:5, "the contest is at hand"; 19:4; Hegesippus, in Eusebius, *H.E.* 2:23; and Montanus.

position of Christians in the Empire (though this cannot be stressed, remembering the persecutions in Lyons and Vienne, and elsewhere), this sense of the immediacy of the end gives way to a sense of indefiniteness. An example of this is Irenaeus' inconclusive and alternative interpretations of the number of the beast in the Apocalypse of John: *Euanthas, Lateinos, Teitan*. According to Hippolytus, who is dependent upon Irenaeus, the end is to come five hundred years after the birth of Christ.¹

Chiliasm, bringing with it the notion of six world-periods of 1,000 years each, may have conduced to the deferment of the "consummation" in the minds of believers; though we know very little of the state of historical chronology among the Christians of the second century. So far had this tendency advanced (in the great centers; distant and provincial regions, like Phrygia, Gaul, Arsinoë, were more conservative) that Montanism came into the experience of the church at large as a revival.

But there is no such interpretation of contemporary events as we see, e.g., in the Jewish apocalypses, Daniel, Enoch, IV Ezra, etc., or in the early Christian Apocalypse of John. Hermas marks the nearest approach to this in the remaining literature of the century; but Hermas' interests were almost wholly intra-ecclesiastical. Unfortunately the early Christian apocalypses, with few and fragmentary exceptions (e.g., Apoc. Petri), have perished; many of them fell under the later ban against heresy.

The main source for eschatological doctrine was found in *the Old and New Testaments*. Outstanding in their significance, of course, were Daniel and the Apocalypse of John, together with the eschatological sayings of our Lord, though the relative infrequency of citation from the latter is notable. But also the prophets, Paul, and even the Law and the Psalms were examined for hints and indications of "things to come." It was an accepted principle that God had known and foreseen all things from the very first, and the "things to come" were known to him long before. It was only natural, therefore, that he should have given hints and foreshadowings of

¹ Iren. 5:30; Hipp., *Fragm. Dan.* 2:7 (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 5. 179b); Melito, in Eus., *H.E.* 4:26:7 f. However, cf. Iren. 3:11:9; 5:29:1; and even Clem. Alex., *Paed.* 2:9.

these in the sacred writings which had been inspired by "the prophetic Spirit." More clearly and openly were these hints to be discerned in the apocalypses than elsewhere, for these were avowedly revelations of things to come, and needed only to be interpreted to lay before men the secrets of the future.¹ Various reasons were suggested to account for the obscurity of these predictions; perhaps the most common one was that which historically and psychologically lies back of the whole phenomenon of apocalyptic literature, the desire for secrecy.²

On the other hand, it was felt that God would make, or was making, a change in this original plan: He arbitrarily "shortened the time" of tribulation for his elect's sake; or he delayed the consummation that the number of the elect might be completed, or that the world might not yet perish (through the removal of the Christians, for whose sakes it consists; cf. the apologists and *Epist. ad Diog.*), and that opportunity might still be afforded the heathen and wicked for repentance (cf. *Hermas*). Such a conception was not without justification in the gospel, however (cf., e.g., *Matt.* 24:22).³

Elaborate efforts were not made until later to combine all the data of the Old and New Testaments into a complete system (e.g., by Hippolytus). Still the beginnings of this movement are to be traced in Irenaeus, and even earlier in the *Didache*. It was inevitable, and must come sooner or later.⁴

¹ Cf. *Barn.* 1:7; 5:3; 17:2.

² Ignatius presupposes the New Testament eschatology (cf. *Eph.* 11:1; 16:1 f.; *Philad.* 3:3); and *Did.*, chap. 16, is based upon the synoptic apocalypse, *Mark*, chap. 13 and parallels. Daniel is presupposed in *Barn.* 4:4, 5; *Justin, Apol.* 32:3; *Dial.* 109; 110:2; 113, and *passim* (*Apoc. John* in *Dial.* 81); *Iren.* 5:25 f. (*Dan.* chap. 7, and *Apoc. John*), for example. Especially valued was the principle, "The day of the Lord is as a thousand years," found categorically stated in the Scriptures (*II Pet.* 3:8; *Ps.* 90:4), and adopted by *Barnabas*, *Papias*, *Justin*, and *Irenaeus* (cf. 5:28:3).

³ Cf. *Justin, Apol.* 45; *App.* 7; *Hermas, Sim.* 10:4: where the delay is occasioned by the sins of believers.

⁴ Irenaeus' eschatological "program" is apparently outlined in 5:30:4: "But when (a) this Antichrist shall have devastated all things in this world [cf. 35:1; including and beginning with, no doubt, the great apostasy (*ca.* 25), and the dissolution of the Roman Empire (*ca.* 26)], (b) he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then (c) the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, (d) sending this man and those who follow him

On the basis of the Scriptures, various conceptions of *the end of the world* (i.e., the physical universe) were entertained. It would either "wax old as doth a garment" and fall into decay (Melito, Origen), or be consumed by fire (Justin and others), or be transmuted into a paradisiacal condition to be the home of the redeemed and the kingdom of the saints ruling with Christ (Barnabas? Papias, Irenaeus). No doubt the second conception (which was consonant with the first; see *Iren.* 4:3, and Melito) was influenced by the Stoic eschatology (which Justin distinguishes from the Christian), just as the last-named conception (chiliastic) was influenced by the Jewish eschatological concepts. This influence, which was external to the primary creative and sustaining influence of the sacred writings (*II Pet.*, chap. 3; *Rev.*, chap. 20), though operating simultaneously therewith after the conception had once fairly found lodgment in the Christian consciousness, was perhaps effective through the medium of converts from paganism and Hellenistic Judaism. These brought with them a predisposition [in favor of this conception equally as important as the contact of Christian writers with heathen philosophers in the great intellectual centers.¹

into the lake of fire [=the Judgment]; (e) but bringing in for the righteous the times of the Kingdom, i.e., the rest, the hallowed seventh day; (f) and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance, in which the Kingdom of the Lord is declared, that "many coming from the east and from the west should sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob" (cf. 3:12:13: "an eternal Kingdom in Israel received from his Father"). According to *Didache*, chap. 16, the following is the scheme of the last things: (a) the appearance of false prophets and corrupters; (b) increase of iniquity and persecution; (c) appearance of "the world-deceiver as Son of God," with signs and wonders, and heretofore unknown *ἀθέμια*; (d) the fire of trial, when many shall stumble and perish; (e) the signs of the truth, "a sign of spreading forth in heaven," sound of the trumpet, and resurrection of the dead; (f) the Lord coming on the clouds of heaven. It is obvious that at least the chief items of these programs are taken from the New Testament. Such additional details as we find, e.g., in Montanism (wars and disturbances to precede the end: *Eus., H.E.* 5:16:18), are simply a repetition of the primitive eschatology attested by the New Testament, or its continuance in tradition.

¹ Traces of the doctrine of a final conflagration are apparent even among the Chiliasts: Justin, *App.* 7; *Apol.* 20:4; Melito, *Syr. remains, Ante-Nic. Fathers*, 8, p. 755a (cf. *Orac. Sib.* 3:83-92). It appears also among the Valentinians (*Iren.* 1:7:1); and in Irenaeus (5:29:2). According to Barnabas, the sun is to cease (5:10) and all things are to be destroyed, including the evil one (21:3); Hermas says that "God will remove the hills" (*Vis.* 1:3:4). Cf. also *I Clem.* 27:4.

We return to a specifically Christian conception (in its second-century form) in the doctrine of *Antichrist*, whose activities were to precede the Parousia and Last Judgment. He was thought of as a great world-deceiver, subject to Satan and endowed with powers of magic. Irenaeus warns his readers (5:28:2), "Let no one imagine that he performs these wonders by divine power, but by the working of magic. We must not be surprised if, since the demons and apostate spirits are at his service, he through their means performs wonders, by which he leads the inhabitants of the earth astray." Barnabas, who considers the world at present under the power of the adversary, understands by the Danielic prophecy that his reign is to be for 350 years; Irenaeus, looking forward to his coming in the future, computes upon the basis of the same passage a reign of $3\frac{1}{2}$ years in the temple at Jerusalem. He is to be the recapitulation in himself of all apostasy and lawlessness.¹

The doctrine of *the second advent of Christ* was a permanent and indispensable element in the eschatology of the second century. Though we should not be prepared to say with Dorner that "the Christian hope of the coming one grew entirely out of faith in him who had come,"² yet the motive, the source of this hope, was undoubtedly faith in Jesus. Without Jesus there would no doubt have been an eschatology. The temper of men's minds in that age, both in Hellenism and in Judaism, demanded it. But such a phenomenon as Christian eschatology would have been unknown—that combination of Jewish eschatological hopes, with a transcendental messianism, and pagan speculations (world-Sabbath, final *ἐκπύρωσις*, etc.), under the overpowering sense of the immediacy of the end.³

¹ Cf. Did. 16:3 f.; Barn. 4:3?; 4:4 f.; 4:9 ὁ μέλας; Justin, *Dial.* 32; Iren. 5:25, 28, 29:2.

² *Doct. Pers. Chr.*, I, 145. This is said in criticism of Baur, who equated primitive Christianity and Ebionism. A similar *granum salis* is to be taken with his statement that the eschatology of the early church was a manifestation of the spirit of assurance that Christianity was to triumph over the heathen world. No doubt such assurance was involved in the Christian hope; but the primitive eschatology was no philosophical development of this conviction in terms of apocalyptic thought, nor was this conviction a conscious motive in any such "development."

³ Cf. Polycarp, *Phil.* 2:1 f.; II Clem. 12:1, "the epiphany of God." Is the obscure passage, Did. 16:6, a reference to "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven"?

We see traces of the specific formulation of this in the doctrine of the two advents (Justin, *Mur. Fragm.*; Irenaeus), and especially in Irenaeus' improvement of the terminology of the doctrine (1:10, *ἔλευσις, παρουσία*). The fact itself, Christ's coming in glory to judge both quick and dead, was nowhere questioned save among the Gnostics; to deny "the hope of his coming" was to cease to be a Christian, even as in the first century. For this reason the Gnostics were looked upon as blasphemers (Justin).¹

The *resurrection* and *last judgment* were similarly unquestioned elements in the eschatology of this century. Particular stress was laid upon the resurrection of the flesh in all its completeness, as the assurance of personal identity at the judgment and afterward (apologists; Irenaeus). The deeds done in the body should be rewarded in the body: how justly, otherwise? The flesh should be revived even as it was created—out of the elements of nature (Justin and others), or vapor (Tatian), or by the reclothing of the naked bones (Tertullian; Odes of Solomon). This was necessary also, that the promises to Abraham and through Abraham to the faithful might be fulfilled, and the promises of Christ to the disciples about eating and drinking in the Kingdom (Irenaeus and the Chiliasts). The last judgment was to be pronounced upon the wicked demons as well as upon men (Justin, Tatian).²

It has usually been translated "flying-forth," as referring to the angels of the Son of Man, thus making the three "signs of the truth" parallel to the stages in I Thess., chap. 4. Is it not equally possible to parallel this with Matt. 24:29-31, which passage the author undoubtedly had in mind in this verse? The chief difficulty, however, is with the first "sign." In Matt. 24:29, the first sign is *ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ*, decidedly. May we suppose that the unintelligible ΕΚΗΕΤΑΣΣΕΩΣ was originally ΕΚΗΙΤΩΣΕΩΣ, from the Matthean phrase *ἀστέρες πεισούνται ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*?

¹ Cf. Justin, *Apol.* 52:3; *Dial.* 117:3; *Mur. Fragm.*, ll. 16-26; Iren. 2:33:5; 3:19:3; 5:26. Jesus is to come in the flesh in which he suffered (Iren. 3:16:8), accompanied by Elias (Justin, *Dial.* 49:3); according to Barnabas, he is to wear a scarlet robe (7:9).

² Though Christ's resurrection is the ground of Christian hope in personal resurrection (I Clem. 24:1; 42:3; Ign., *Trall.* 9:2; Polyc., *Phil.* 5:2), yet philosophical and scriptural arguments are adduced to prove it, especially by the apologists (I Clem. chaps. 23-25; Athenagoras; Theophilus; Iren. 5:2-15). The Hebraic character of Did., chap. 16, may be indicated by its teaching that only the saints are to rise again (6 f.); elsewhere in the writings of the century this view is repudiated: a resurrection of all men is the necessary prelude to the general judgment (Aristides, Justin

The *final state of the blessed* is in communion with God (Irenaeus), and in company with Christ, reigning with him (Ignatius, Polycarp; *et al.*) in everlasting felicity. There is no toil, but an endless advancement in knowledge and in bliss (Irenaeus, Origen), as "the presbyters" affirmed, "through the Spirit to the Son, through the Son to the Father" (Iren. 5:36).¹

The exact relation of the *millennium* (according to the Chiliasts) to the general judgment and the final state of the blessed and condemned is not made clear, that is, whether those who are raised from the dead to enjoy the thousand-years' reign of Christ on earth will thereafter be judged; or whether this state of happiness merges into that of final bliss (Barnabas: "The beginning of the other world"; Irenaeus: "The commencement of incorruption"?). But neither was it made clear in the Apocalypse of John. In affirming the doctrine of the millennial reign, Irenaeus insists that the promises of Christ could not be fulfilled in a "super-celestial place," and therefore must require a fulfilment upon earth, i.e., upon the renewed earth to which Christ will return. Evidently "the super-celestial place" was the common conception of "heaven" (so "the presbyters") as the place of eternal bliss. To this may be compared Origen's conception of the intermediate place (seven heavens) and the words of Mart. Polyc., "the martyrs

[cf. *Dial.* 81:4], Tatian, Irenaeus [3:16:6]). By resurrection was uniformly meant and understood the resurrection of the flesh (i.e., of "both body and soul": Mart. Polyc. 14:2; Ign., *Eph.* 11:2, he would pray to be raised in his bonds; II Clem. 9:4 f.; Tatian, *Orat.* 6:2; 25; *Epist. of Ches. in Lyons and Vienne*, Eus., *H.E.* 5:1:63, the hope of palingenesis; Iren. 5:31:1, "universam . . . resurrectionem," etc.). The Pauline doctrine of the resurrection seems to have fallen into the hands of the Gnostics and, subject to their interpretation, to have made little impression upon the faith of the second century; see Bigg, *Christian Platonists of Alex.*, 2d ed., p. 61. In general, though not consistently, Jesus (rather than the Father) is thought of as the Judge: Polyc., *Phil.* 2:1 f.; Did. 16:6 ff.; Barn. 4:12; 5:7; 7:2, 9; 21:6; Hermas, *Sim.* 9:12, figure of inspection of the tower by the Son of God; II Clem. 4:5; 16:3; 17:6 f.; Aristides, *Apol.* 17:8; Justin, *Apol.* 52 f.; *Epist. ad Diog.* 7:6; 10:7; Iren. 3:16:6.

¹ Cf. Mart. Polyc. 2:3, the martyrs have entered into the good things of God, and are "no longer men, but angels"; Justin, *Apol.* 10:2, those who are worthy shall "reign with God, being delivered from corruption and suffering"; 20:4; *Dial.* 46:7; *Apoc. Petri*, "a great place outside this world, exceeding bright with light"; *Epist. ad Diog.* 6:8, "incorruption in the heavens"; Iren. 5:27, "communion with God, which is life and light, and the enjoyment of all the benefits which he has in store."

are no longer men, but are already angels." Very striking is the frequency with which I Cor. 2:9 is quoted in this century. It seems to have been a favorite description of the future bliss: "The things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man—the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."¹

In Barn. 15:4, the age of the world is fixed at 6,000 years, on the basis of the creation narrative in Genesis, interpreted by the rule, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years." This is very similar to the interpretation of II Enoch, chap. 33, which Professor Charles dates in the first half of the first century and locates in Alexandria as the work of a Hellenist Jew.² The likeness is not strong enough to imply a direct relationship, however. In the following verse (5), Barnabas interprets the statement, "And on the seventh day he rested," in this way: "This means, when his Son shall come and destroy the time of the wicked one and judge the ungodly and change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall he truly rest on the seventh day." According to 5:10, the sun is to cease to exist, but yet (6:17) the earth is to be inherited and dominated; therefore, according to the author, the only change to come in the end is a change in the heavenly bodies, the destruction of lawlessness, the resurrection, and the judgment. Consonant with this would be the doctrine of the renewal of the earth (Chiliasm), which seems to be suggested in vs. 7, "Lawlessness no longer existing, and all things being renewed by the Lord." However, there is no logical development of this thought: we might expect a chiliastic treatment of the thousand years representing the seventh day, but this is not once suggested. On the other hand, the *eighth* day is ἄλλου κόσμου ἀρχή. It is extremely difficult to see any definite Chiliasm in this. His primary concern is with the obedience of Christians to the command to sanctify the Sabbath. In the end (vs. 9), he justifies the Christian observance of the eighth (i.e., first) day of the week. If his motive were

¹ Polyc., *Phil.* 11:2, "sancti mundum judicabunt"; 12:2; 9:2; Barn. 6:17, "live and have dominion over the land"—which is not, however, to be understood as thoroughgoing realism (cf. Matt. 5:5), but is a spiritual interpretation of the promise in Exod. 33:1 ff., and is equated in vs. 19 to "inheritance of the covenant of the Lord."

² Charles, *Eschatology*, 2d. ed., p. 315; *Apoc. and Pseudep.*, II, 426, 427, 429, 451 n.

chiliastic (i.e., eschatological), we should have clear evidence thereof right here. But nothing whatever is made of the seventh day, except God's displeasure at the Jewish Sabbath. The seventh day is simply the time of the Parousia (vs. 5), the destruction of the wicked one, the judgment, and the change in the heavens. We might even suppose that the author believed himself to be living in the "seventh day." What he presupposes is the common Christian interpretation (borrowed from Hellenistic Judaism?) of the six days of creation as symbolic of the ages of the world. But there is no hint of the chiliastic reign of Christ upon earth *before* the judgment. Is it possible that this represents a stratum of the older eschatology lying back of the Apocalypse of John and Papias? Here, the season of the wicked one is "abolished" (21:3); there, limited or temporarily proscribed. Here, the judgment of the ungodly takes place; there, it is deferred until the end of the millennial reign. Here, the sun, moon, and stars are changed; there, only Jerusalem is re-erected as the seat of Christ's millennial government. So little of any real Chiliasm is there in his mind that the author has in the end to place the true Sabbath in the other world, the beginning of which is the eighth day, the Christian's Sabbath. Such confusion as this could not long be maintained. Chiliasm was the logical development of these premises, the combination of two conflicting eschatologies, one with a temporal kingdom, the other with an eternal, combined upon the hypothesis of a world-Sabbath.¹

Papias (Eus., *H.E.* 3:39:11 f.; cf. Iren. 5:33:3 f.) has been looked upon generally as the foster-father of this doctrine in the second century. Was he indebted for it to mystical exegesis of the creation narrative in Genesis? Anastasius Sin. seems to have held this opinion, for he says of Papias that "he interpreted the whole hexaëmeron of Christ and the Church," and likewise "the teachings concerning paradise."² Papias is probably a representative of that cluster of apostolic men, *μεγάλα στοιχεῖα*, mentioned by

¹ Cf. the collection of material for the history of this idea in Bousset, *Rel. des Jud.*, 2d ed., pp. 330-33; also Volz, *Jüd. Esch.*, p. 236; pp. 62 f.

² I.e., Eden, not the future state; cf. Gen. 2:8 LXX. Anast. quoted in Gebh.-Harn.-Zahn, *fragm.* vi, vii.

Polycrates in his letter to Victor.¹ Their Jewish customs may be noted: John was a priest and wore the *petalon*, and they kept Easter on "the fourteenth day . . . according to the gospel." This may be sufficient to connect him outwardly with Jewish traditions and Jewish apocalyptic hopes. (Cf. below, on Chiliasm).

Cerinthus was later accused of teaching a carnal and perverse Chiliasm (Eus., *H.E.* 3:28:2, 4 f.), but such an accusation hardly accords with Irenaeus' representation of his teaching (*adv. haer.*, 1:26:1; cf. Hippolytus, *Philos.* 7:21), according to whom it was gnostic (docetic), and hence left no room for eschatology, in the received sense.²

Justin acknowledges that in his expectation of the restoration of Jerusalem he does not represent the whole church (*Dial.* 80; cf. 109; 113; 119:5). Irenaeus undertakes to establish by philosophical considerations and by exegesis what he had received from the presbyters as the Christian tradition on the subject (5:32, 33:2). It is his final conclusion that "John . . . did distinctly foresee the first 'resurrection of the just,' and the inheritance in the Kingdom of the earth; and what the prophets have prophesied concerning it harmonize (with his vision). For the Lord also taught these things, when he promised that he would have the mixed cup new with his disciples in the Kingdom." The realization of these promises means the unity of the world under one God, the Father, through his Son, through whom the "creature" ascends to the Father, passing beyond the angels, being made after the image and likeness of God" (5:36:3).

The *final state of the condemned* is one of punishment, in fire and torment, and everlasting death. The wicked retain sensation forever, or are endowed with it even in death (Justin). This punishment is pictured luridly in certain instances (e.g., Apoc. Petri) as a pain of sense; doubtless this was the popular view, though such apocalypticism was always ethical, and pervaded with a sense of the inevitableness of just retribution. In one passage, unique in the century, Irenaeus rises to a more spiritual conception:

¹ Eus., *H.E.* 5:24; and cf. *Chron. pasch.*, Olymp. 235^b, Gebh.-Harn.-Zahn, *fragm.* xvii.

² Cf. Krüger in *PRE*³, III, 777.

eternal punishment consists in eternal loss, *poena damni*, exclusion from communion with God.¹

The *intermediate state* is not a universal belief. Certain statements of the earlier writers of this century (e.g., Ignatius) seem definitely to exclude it. As the century advances, it becomes clearer; though we cannot argue that this is a case of "progress of doctrine," as our sources are too scanty. Neither can we make too much of an argument from silence (in the earlier decades of this century), for the same reason, and also because traces of the doctrine are to be found in the New Testament. Perhaps it is best viewed as the answer to the natural query, "With the judgment still deferred, what of those who have died and entered into rest?" Certain of the Gnostics taught metempsychosis; others, a "sleep of the soul"

¹ *Adv. haer.*, 5:27. Cf. Ign., *Eph.* 16:2, unquenchable fire; Mart. Polyc. 2:3; 11:2; Barn. 20:1; Herm., *Vis.* 2:3:2; *Sim.* 1:4:3; Justin, *App.* 7, "wicked angels and men shall cease to exist"; it is not easy to harmonize this with *Apol.* 52, according to which they shall not cease to exist, but shall be endowed with "eternal sensibility," though the "fire of judgment" may be "everlasting," i.e., hell (*Apol.* 19:8). This inconsistency is found even within the *Apology*, where (20:4) it is said that "the souls of the wicked, being endowed with sensation even after death, are punished, and those of the good, being delivered from punishment, spend a blessed existence." In *Dial.* 5, souls are "begotten," and therefore "both die and are punished." This perhaps sheds some light upon the difficulty; though in the *Apology* a resurrection of all men was essential. Cf. also Tatian 13:1, "death by punishment in immortality"; 14, demons to be punished more severely than men; Apoc. Petri, a picture of Tartarus; *Epist. Eccl. Ly. et V.*, Eus., *H.E.* 5:1:26, Gehenna; Iren. 3:4:2. The doctrine of the final state of the blessed and condemned naturally fits in with that of the resurrection of the flesh. The Christian teachers of the second century were busied in establishing this latter doctrine, in the face of prevalent heathen and gnostic beliefs regarding the immortality of the soul and the destruction of the body, not merely because this doctrine was embedded in the New Testament and the primitive tradition, let alone on account of Chiliasm, but also because it was felt that the denial of the resurrection struck Christian ethics and the doctrine of the sacraments squarely and mortally (cf. Iren. 2:29:2; 33:4; 5:2; 5:6; 5:8). No part of the primitive Christian eschatology is merely eudaemonistic, but is dominated by an ethical motive throughout. And, on the other hand, the fearfulness of hell (e.g., cf. Hippolytus, especially the end of the *Phil.*) represents simply the sovereignty of ethics asserted in the field of eschatology. It is not a question of the adoption of certain Jewish or Greek eschatological ideas, or of their survival, but rather, Why were they adopted? Why did they survive? Harnack well says (*DG*, 4th ed., I, 194), "Die furchtbare Vorstellung von der Hölle, weit entfernt einen Rückschritt in der Geschichte des religiösen Geistes zu bedeuten, ist vielmehr ein Beweis dafür, dass er die sittlich indifferenten Gesichtspunkte ausgeschieden hat und im Bunde mit dem sittlichen Geiste souverän geworden ist."

(cf. Irenaeus; according to Origen, this was taught by certain Arabians); both doctrines were rejected by orthodox believers. It is doubtful if they influenced any but a narrow circle of the Gnostics.¹

Noteworthy is the doctrine of the intermediate state as developed by later writers. Tertullian, already under the influence of Montanism, and a Chiliast (*Adv. M.* 3:25), holds that the resurrection is to be gradual: an immediate resurrection for those prepared for it, a deferred resurrection for the more guilty, who must make amends by a longer course of purification in the underworld (*De an.* 58; *De res. carn.* 42). On the other hand, Origen, who denied all materialistic eschatological expectations and dismisses contemptuously the chiliastic eschatology (*De princ.* 2:11:2), holds that the resurrection is to be in a different, i.e., a changed, world, and therefore in a different body from that body of flesh in which the soul formerly lived upon earth (so he understands Paul; cf. *Cont. Cels.* 4:57; 5:18; 5:23); and also that the saints dwell in the air (*De princ.* 2:11:6) and increase in knowledge (*ibid.* 5; cf. 1:6:3; 2:3:3; 3:1:21; Clem. Alex., *Strom.* 6:13 ff.). Apparently he believes in a future probation, though in some respects his teaching approaches very near to that of the mediaeval church (cf. *Catech. Conc. Trident.* 1:6:3). We cannot here enter into the history of the doctrine of purgatory, though it has its roots in the present period, and even deeper still in the past: cf. I Enoch 22:9 ff.

Chiliasm stands as the great monument to the apostolic doctrine of the ἀποκατάστασις πάντων in this century (on Chiliasm, cf. *infra*).

¹ Cf. Polyc., *Phil.* 9:2, departed saints are with the Lord; Mart. Polyc. 2:3; Justin taught, as we have seen, that "souls are endowed with eternal sensibility"; the Valentinian doctrine of the intermediate state was simply a part of their metaphysical-ethical system; cf. Iren. 1:6:4; 7:1. Irenaeus summarizes his own belief in 2:34:1, "By these things it is plainly declared that souls continue to exist, that they do not pass from body to body, that they possess the form of a man, so that they may be recognized, and retain the memory of things in this world; moreover, that . . . each class [of souls] receives a habitation such as it has deserved, even before the judgment." (This is hardly to be confounded with Tertullian's doctrine of the corporeality of the soul, *De an.* 7). Irenaeus is a theologian, and a biblical theologian at that; he is also a thoroughgoing traditionalist (3:2-4). Hence his teaching no doubt represents the common belief of Christians in his day, and is valuable for second-century doctrine as is Aquinas for the doctrine of the Middle Ages: the conservative spirit of both is a guaranty that they stand on commonly accepted ground.

However, outside the chiliastic movement (i.e., the movement *technically* known as Chiliasm, representing a belief in a thousand-years' reign of Christ on earth), we find some traces of a belief in the renovation of the earth (Barnabas; Odes of Solomon, etc.). It is extremely doubtful if this represents a view very far removed from, or, if later, uninfluenced by, Chiliasm. It is only where we see the (Stoic-Sibylline-II Petrine) doctrine of *ἐκπύρωσις* in complete possession of the field that the doctrine of the apocatastasis is excluded. Their full harmonization was possible only by transferring the restoration of all things from the chiliastic Seventh Day of a thousand years to the "new heaven and new earth" following the judgment and the destruction of the present world (Apoc. John 21:1); for the destruction of the present world was understood to take place by fire (comparable to the deluge, according to the apologists), which should be for the purpose of renovation and renewal.¹

II

The eschatology of the second century is definitely a continuation of the primitive Christian eschatology, and with much less change introduced into it than we are sometimes led to suppose. The Christians of this century possessed a norm, viz., the writings gradually being incorporated into *the New Testament* and the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament, upon which in turn the New Testament writings were in large measure based (cf. Apocalypse of John and the Old Testament). The principle of interpretation seems generally to have been to prefer a literal interpretation where possible; where impossible, to choose a figurative, or "mystical." Both kinds of interpretation are common (cf. Barnabas and Irenaeus). In one sense or the other, the Scriptures (and

¹ Cf. Barn. 15:7; Papias, in Iren. 5:33:3 f., *venient dies* . . . Papias' teaching may be due to oral tradition (Eus., *H.E.* 3:39:3 f., 11), but is closely parallel to II Bar. 29:5; Professor Charles thinks that this represents a fragment of some old apocalypse (*Apocrypha and Pseudep.* II, 497). Cf. Justin, *Dial.* 113:5; Iren. 5:34 f. The true primitive apocatastasis is represented in the "new heaven and new earth" of Rev., chap. 21. Chiliasm attempted in the second century to identify the apocatastasis with the increased fruitfulness of the earth during the millennial era (Rev., chap. 20); but this was foredoomed, as it did not harmonize with the Apocalypse, and because it confused two mutually exclusive eschatologies.

especially the prophets) were thought to contain predictions of "things to come." Aside from the Old Testament and New Testament there was some *contact with Judaism* through the pseudepigraphical works (especially the Enoch and Baruch literature, and, in Jewish dress, the Orac. Sibyll.), though this contact is very difficult to trace. However, it does appear in some places unmistakably. So great an appeal was made to the pretended oracles of the Sibyl that Celsus applied to the Christians the epithet "Sibyllists" (Origen, *Contra Cels.* 5:61). *Tradition* also, viewed apart from the Old Testament, the New Testament and the apocalyptic literature, exercised its influence, though our chief example is Irenaeus, late in the period. Numerous agrapha occur in earlier writers, testifying to a living stream of faith, not mediated through our documents, reaching back to the apostles, and through them to the Lord. *Private speculation* (or apocalyptic) does not seem to have exercised any great influence; certainly nothing like the influence upon Judaism (and Christianity) of the creative geniuses whose dreams and speculations are contained in the Jewish pseudepigraphical literature. Montanus and his school seem to form the sole exception. The speculative thinkers of this century were the Gnostics; their tendency, however, led them away from the region of eschatological interests, and their efforts do not seem to have disturbed the eschatological faith of the multitude of Christians. The church in the second century was a close communion, closer than we often assume, and heresy more than a nickname for mild dissent (cf. Justin; Irenaeus). *Heathen sources* do not seem to have had any great influence upon the writers of this century. Undoubtedly the Greek influence was strongly present; e.g., the Stoic eschatology (justified, however, by II Pet., etc.), and the popular concepts of Tartarus (Apoc. Petri; Hippolytus, with whom, however, it is largely a matter of etymology: the conception itself is derivable from the Old Testament and Christian sources). The apologists demonstrated the follies of popular (Greek) heathenism, and so to some extent guarded against this influence; but they minimized their work by admitting that the philosophers borrowed their wisdom from the sacred writings of Moses, David, and the prophets. It is not to be doubted that

Gentiles who became Christians brought with them a bent for eschatological thinking: the existence of faith in the Sibyl, the fourth Eclogue of Vergil, the popularity of Stoic teachings, etc., indicate the mood of late Hellenism, certainly in some measure true of the beginning of our century. As the religious influences originating in Persia and the East increased, this mood was destined to deepen. As an example of this, the chiliastic world-Sabbath is really much older than the Apocalypse of John. And it is possible that Montanism to some degree responded to this ethos of the age, and does not represent a pure revival of the primitive eschatological temper in an alien environment, under the sole influence of the New Testament, that is, through a literary medium (the illiteracy of the Montanist constituency renders this hypothesis difficult). It is not clear that this state of mind is due, as has been suggested, to economic conditions under the Antonines. If such were the case, we should expect hostility to Rome, especially among those who adopted Chiliasm (as did the Montanists; e.g., Tertullian) under the influence of Apoc. John 17-19. But it is significant that the only indication of hostility to Rome is found in Irenaeus (cf. his interpretation of Daniel, the division of the Empire into ten parts, and his suggested explanation of the number 666 as *Lateinos*), and here it is anything but explicit. The apologists may be represented by Melito, to whom, as to Paul, the Empire is a bond of security and peace and public order.

Without any question, Chiliasm is due, formally, to the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse of John. But essentially it is a continuation of the old apocalyptic speculations of Judaism. How are we to account for this, the existence of a school of eschatological thought, if it was such, in Asia Minor in the second century?

It has been suggested that this was an intellectual movement¹ or that it was in opposition to Gnosticism.² But such suggestions

¹ Cf. Dorner, *op. cit.*, I, 413, "Chiliasm was the form in which Christianity first gave conscious expression to the conviction of its destiny to rule the world." But there was nothing "conscious" in this; the motive is not a historical one, but merely represents Dorner's semi-Hegelian philosophy of the history of doctrine.

² Cf. Professor George Cross, in *Bib. World*, July, 1915, p. 5, "The spiritualism of the Gnostics was met by Jewish realism."

are not convincing. Our problem is not to account for Chiliasm (i.e., the technical doctrine of the thousand-years' reign of Christ on earth, which is easily derivable from the Apocalypse of John), but for the survival, in the far-off region of proconsular Asia, of ideas and modes of thinking indigenous to Palestine before 70 A.D., i.e., genuine Jewish ideas; and an intellectual movement does not satisfy the demands for explanation raised by this phenomenon.

More significant for the final solution would be a consideration of the presence of large Jewish populations in Asia Minor (cf. Schürer, *GJV*⁴, III, 15-17; Hasting's *DB*, V, 93), in Ephesus, Smyrna, Hierapolis, etc. The numbers of Jews already in residence in these cities were increased by the settlement among them of refugees after the fall of Jerusalem. No doubt there were many Christians among them. The flight from Jerusalem (and Palestine) took place at a time when Christian Jews still had more in common with other Jews than with gentile Christians. Many of the cities occupied by Jews were also Christian centers (e.g., Ephesus, Hierapolis, Colossae, Laodicea, etc.). At any rate, "from this time forward, it is neither to Jerusalem nor to Pella (whither the Christians fled before the fall of Jerusalem), but to proconsular Asia, and more especially to Ephesus as its metropolis, that we must look for the continuance of Apostolic doctrine and practice" (Lightfoot, *Sup. Rel.*, p. 91). Eusebius (*H.E.* 3:39) gives the tradition regarding Philip and John the Apostle, who came here after the fall of Jerusalem, and also the tradition regarding Matthew's compilation of the Logia in Hebrew, handed down by Papias. The Jewish customs of the Christian community there are clearly indicated in Polycrates' letter to Victor (*v. supra*).¹

It was natural for this period to be full of apocalyptic activities, of the study of Scripture, tradition, and apocalyptic works, and of renewed speculation; the whole temper of thought for a while after the fall of Jerusalem was bound to be apocalyptic. It was at this time and in this environment that the Apocalypse of John was written, which makes use of previously composed or collected Jewish materials, as so many scholars suppose. And it was in this

¹ Cf. the clear and careful rationale of Quartodecimanism given in Stanton, *Gospels as Historical Documents*, I, 175 ff.

region and in this environment that Chiliasm arose.¹ In the second century Papias was only one representative (the last?) of this Judaic apocalyptic "school of thought," which seems strangely out of place in the decades about 140 and outside Palestine, in a center of gentile Christianity, but which can be definitely traced back to the apostle John and to the most primitive Christianity. This "school" of apocalyptic had remained stationary and unproductive for a generation or more when Papias produced his *Exposition of the Divine Oracles*;² and even then it appears that his work was not itself of an apocalyptic nature. In other words, Chiliasm represents the persistence of the primitive traditions and expectations in Asia Minor, whither they were transplanted by the body of Christian-Jewish refugees who came there after the fall of Jerusalem, and constituted the *μεγάλα στοιχεῖα* to which Polycrates referred. This does not imply a peculiar "Asia Minor theology" (Harnack, *DG*, 4th ed., I, 168 f.); but it implies a peculiar conservatism due to Jewish modes of thought transferred to Christian hopes. These primitive expectations and these Jewish modes of thought both found their norm in the Apocalypse of John. Hence it was that the battle with Chiliasm as the representative of both was waged on the field of the authenticity of this writing. And to the early acceptance of this writing is due the prevalence of Chiliasm (i.e., technical Chiliasm, not the primitive eschatology in general). Professor Harnack (art. "Millennium," *Encyc. Brit.*, 9th ed.) states that it is a proof of the prevalence of this doctrine that a philosopher, Justin, should accept it; but Justin himself tells us that he accepts it on the ground of John's Apocalypse (*Dial.* 81:4). Irenaeus accepts Chiliasm as part of the tradition from the Asia Minor "presbyters," unquestioningly and implicitly (cf. Zahn, art. "Iren.," in *PRE*, IX, 410). Bethune-Baker's view, that "millenarianism was too widely accepted in the Church to be characteristic of any particular school of thought" (*Int. to Early Hist. of Chr. Doct.*, p. 66; cf. Gieseler, in Hagenbach,

¹ "It is probable that millenarianism prevailed throughout that part of Asia Minor where the memory of St. John was preserved." Tixeront, *Hist. des Dog.*, I, 218.

² It is probable that he collected his materials before or about 110, and wrote after 130; cf. *PRE*³, XIV, 645.

Hist. of Docts., 1861, I, 215), is true only in a sense; and that is simply the sense in which it is impossible to speak of the influence of the Apocalypse of John as producing a school (for its influence passed far beyond the circle of western Asia Minor communities). No doubt that is a true sense; but is it a true interpretation of the facts to speak of the chiliastic eschatology as the universal primitive eschatology (as Zahn also does, *loc. cit.* Cf. Harnack, *DG*, I, 187: "Chiliasmus . . . findet sich überall, wo das Evangelium noch nicht hellenisirt ist)? The error seems to consist in using the term Chiliasm to cover more than it technically means, viz., to represent all the materialistic elements in the primitive eschatology. It is a mistake to credit every reference to the resurrection of the flesh, or to the *restoratio omnium*, or to the reign of the saints, or to the inheritance of the earth, to Chiliasm, the doctrine of the reign of Christ in Jerusalem with his risen saints for the thousand-years' interim between the Parousia and the final judgment. Yet this mistake has been handed down from generation to generation in the nomenclature of doctrinal history. Surely Chiliasm is not a doctrine universally taught in the New Testament; and yet the New Testament expressly teaches the resurrection of the flesh, the restoration of all things, the reign of the saints with Christ, etc.

The history of the decline of Chiliasm would take us outside our period. However, none of the reasons frequently alleged seem sufficient to account for it (adoption by the Montanists, the ban against Judaism, the "moralistic spiritualism" of the church, Alexandrian theology, the political obedience of Christians, etc.), unless taken together. With the leaders of the church, Origen's theology had most influence; with the common people, the gradual and slow shifting of the point of view of Christianity, from world-rejection to world-acceptance, a process carried out only after several generations had passed. (Cf. Tixeront, *HD*, I, 220).